

Message Text

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SUBJECT: EMERGENCY, DEMOCRACY AND THE ROLE OF THE
PRESS IN INDIA

BEGIN SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER GANDHI'S DEFENSE OF THE
PRESENT STATE OF EMERGENCY AND CENSORSHIP OF THE PRESS
WAS PLAYED UP BY MOST NEW DELHI DAILIES. MEDIA HIGH-
LIGHTED GOVERNMENT OF INDIA'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF A FRESH
STUDY INTO NEWSPAPER PROBLEMS. END SUMMARY.

1. ALL NEWSPAPERS FRONTPAGED AND ALL INDIA RADIO'S
LEAD STORY JULY 10 REPORTED MRS. GANDHI'S STATEMENT
THAT DEMOCRACY HAS NOT BEEN ABANDONED. TYPICAL HEADLINES:
"PM REFUTES CHARGE OF FORSAKING DEMOCRACY" (TIMES OF
INDIA); "DEMOCRACY NOT ABANDONED, ONLY DERAILED: PM"
(HINDUSTAN TIMES).

2. ALL INDIA RADIO AND MOST DAILIES QUOTED MRS. GANDHI
THAT SHE WAS NOT HYPERSENSITIVE TO CRITICISM BUT WAS
SENSITIVE TO UNDUE CRITICISM OF THE COUNTRY AND ITS
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMS. SPEAKING ON THE ROLE OF THE PRESS,
SHE TOLD A GROUP OF DELHI EDITORS THAT THE PRESS SHOULD
CONTAIN CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM AND GIVE "NEW DIRECTIONS"
TO THE COUNTRY. INSTEAD, SHE SAID, A LARGE SECTION OF
THE PRESS HAD IDENTIFIED ITSELF WITH THE OPPOSITION AND
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WAS TRYING TO UNDERMINE THE NATION'S CONFIDENCE BY

PRESENTING A DISTORTED PICTURE. SOME HEADLINES: "PRESS SHOULD GIVE NEW DIRECTIONS: PM"(HIJDUSTAN TIMES); "PM AVERSE TO UNDUE CRITICISM OF COUNTRY" (INDIAN EXPRESS); "CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM WELCOME : "PM (FINANCIAL EXPRESS).

3. DELHI TV AND SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS CARRIED PRESS TRUST OF INDIA WIRESTORY SAYING FORTY SEVEN DELHI EDITORS (MOSTLY OF LANGUAGE AND PARTY PAPERS) HAVE REAFFIRMED FULL FAITH IN ALL MEASURES TAKEN RECENTLY BY THE PRIME MINISTER, INCLUDING PRE-CENSORSHIP. TYPICAL HEADLINE: "EDITORS BACK PM'S POLICIES" (TIMES OF INDIA).

4. MOST NEWSPAPERS, RADIO AND TV HIGHLIGHTED MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING V.C. SHUKLA'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED "TO STUDY THE PROBLEMS OF NEWSPAPERS AFRESH AND IN ITS TOTALITY." TYPICAL HEADLINE: " NEW STUDY OF NEWSPAPERS" PROBLEMS" (STATEMENT).

5. IN AN EDITORIAL "CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE" THE TIMES OF INDIA SAID: " THE EMERGENCY SEEMS TO HAVE CREATED AT LAST THE CONDITIONS FOR A CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE LEADERS OF LABOR, TRADE AND INDUSTRY ..." EXPLAINING HOW EVEN OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES ARE "PROFITIOUS" FOR A BREAKTHROUGH ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT, EDIT CAUTIONED THAT THERE COULD BE NO SHORT CUTS TO IMPROVED PERFORMANCE AND PROSPERITY AND STRESSED THE NEED FOR DISCIPLINE AND DEDICATION OF MANAGERS AND WORKERS TO THEIR JOBS. HEMSING

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